

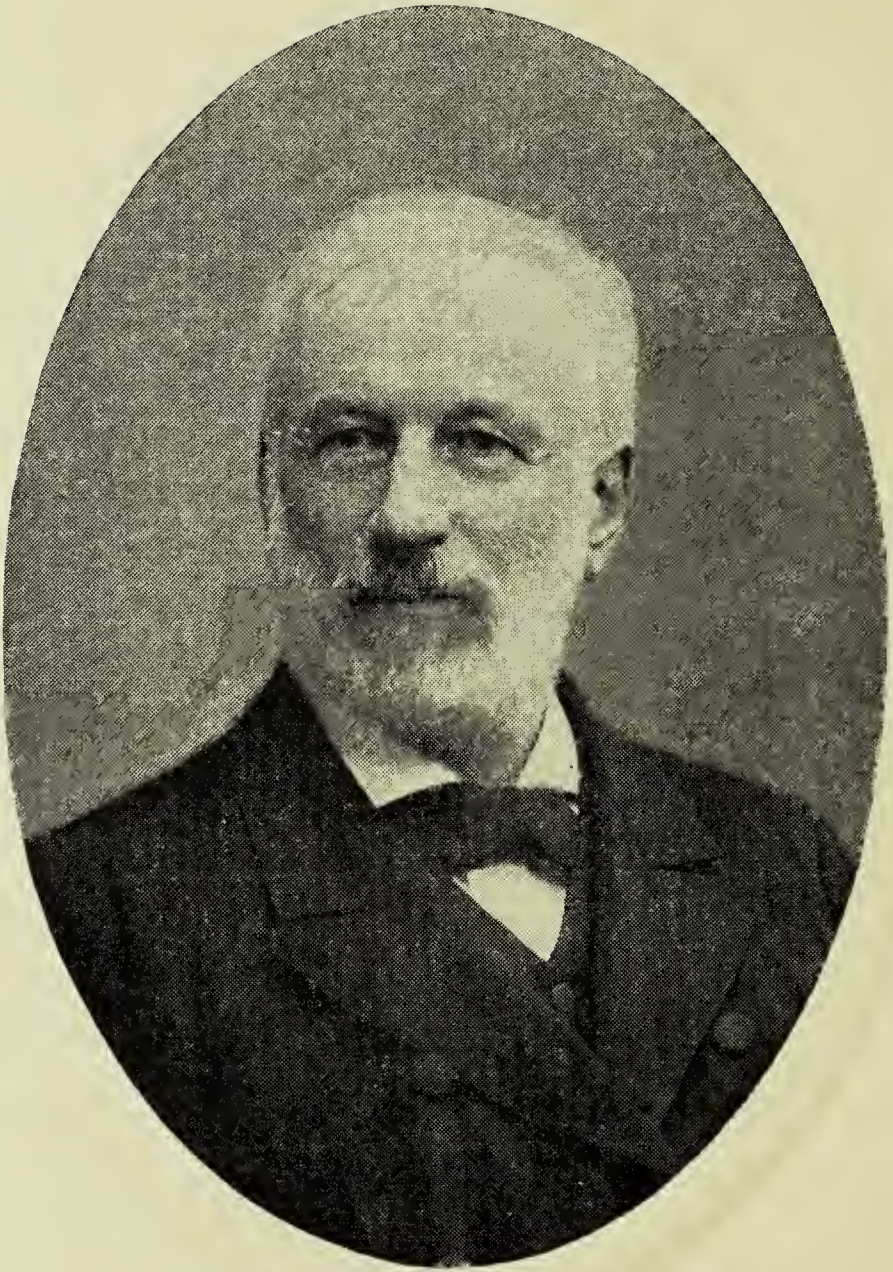






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REV. JOHN E. CLOUGH, D. D.  
*Taken in New York, 1891.*



# John E. Clough

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MISSIONARY TO THE  
TELUGUS OF SOUTH INDIA

A SKETCH

*by*

Emma Rauschenbusch Clough, Ph.D.



B O S T O N , U . S . A .

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American Baptist Missionary Union  
NINETEEN HUNDRED and TWO

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*Emma Rauschenbusch Clough*



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# A S K E T C H O F JOHN E. CLOUGH

*Missionary to the Telugus of South India*

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IN 1836 the first Baptist missionary was sent to the Telugus of southern India, and in that same year, July 16, a boy was born near Frewsburg, in Chautauqua County, N.Y., who went out twenty-eight years later to give his life to the work of that mission. John Everett Clough was to render special service and God prepared him for it. At the very outset he was given by inheritance the instincts of the pioneer. To settle in a new country and to go forward in the face of obstacles, came to him naturally. One grandfather served seven years under Washington, including the winter at Valley Forge; the other grandfather, about

the year 1790, cut his way four miles through the forests of Pennsylvania and bought the site of what is now the village of Fairview. Of Welsh-Puritan descent on his father's side, of Scotch-English descent on his mother's, a typical Yankee, he inherited the practical ability of his race, mingled with Puritan faith and Scotch piety—a goodly heritage.

His father was wealthy when the son was born, but by a deed of friendship he lost his property at a stroke, and the son grew up in the hard but clean poverty of a rudimentary civilization in the new states of Illinois and Iowa. Where the Indian had recently left a government reservation to withdraw to tracts still more remote, the Cloughs staked off 1,600 acres of wild prairie land in northern Iowa and held it with squatter sovereignty until they had paid the government for the whole claim. Civilization came to them; the village of



Strawberry Point grew on the borders of their farm; thrift prevailed and in 1853 the family, consisting of five sons and two daughters, had prosperity on their side. But meantime the future missionary had learned the meaning of poverty. Many a time he has said to the destitute Pariah in India who complained to him that he had nothing but porridge to eat: "You cannot tell *me* anything about poverty. I too have lived by the week on little else than corn meal mush." And the Pariah knew that he was understood.

When he was seventeen years old young Clough was invited by a party of United States surveyors to go with them as chain and hatchet carrier into southern Minnesota. He went and, with his quick perception of what was wanted, used the following winter vacation for the study of surveying, algebra and trigonometry. When spring came and the surveying

party again started out, the compass was put into his hands. The third and fourth years he was sworn in as United States Deputy Surveyor and sent by his chief, with a party of fifteen men under him, to complete a contract for the government. Not yet twenty years old, he went with his men over the wild prairies of Minnesota in the days when Minneapolis was a mere village. Courage and self-reliance grew apace up there in God's broad country, for God wanted a man for His work in India whose methods would have the element of fearlessness in them, lest he be afraid of a mass movement toward Christianity. His certificate as United States Deputy Surveyor was respected by the Indian Government when he applied for engineering contracts in behalf of thousands in the days of famine.

With money enough invested for a five years' course of study, he asked his sur-

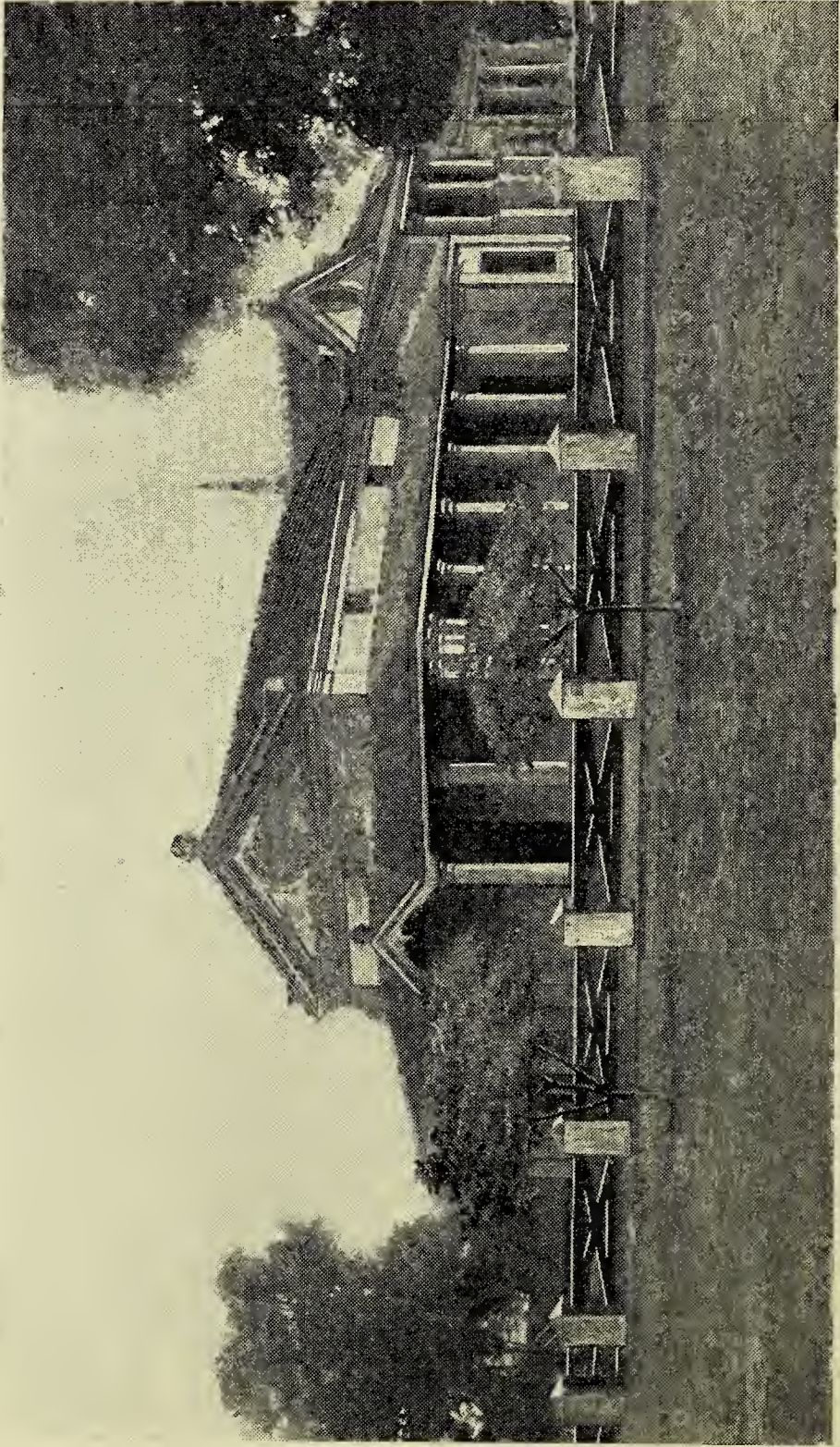
veying chief in the fall of 1857 for the best school in Iowa, for he wanted to be one of the wealthiest lawyers in the State by the time he was forty. He was directed to the Burlington College and here he became poor in spirit, and the crisis of 1858 made him poor in pocket. His ambitious plans were forgotten, and as a humble follower of Jesus he went out, a Baptist missionary, to that forlorn hope—the Telugu mission. Until he went to Burlington, religious influences had been strangely lacking in his life. There was no family altar in his home, no Sunday school for him out on the prairies of Illinois and Iowa, no church in the wilds of Minnesota. But at Burlington he found professors and students who were earnest Christians. His room-mate, A. D. McMichael, announced at the outset his intention of reading the Bible and praying before retiring at night. Clough

said, "I guess I can stand it if you can." At first he continued his studies while McMichael prayed; then he closed his book and listened, for his room-mate was praying for him. When finally he too knelt, McMichael went to Dr. G. J. Johnson and said, "I think Clough is not far from the Kingdom; he kneels with me in prayer." Half an hour later his pastor knocked at his door and found him over his own Bible anxious to know the way. With the prompt decision which has been one of his marked characteristics all through life, he took for himself the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and was baptized February 11, 1858.

During the same year Dr. S. M. Osgood, a returned missionary from Burma, came to Burlington and after a public appeal for workers, visited Mr. Clough in his room. The latter kept it to himself, but in mind he henceforth felt committed to become







CHAPEL AT ONGOLE

TAKEN IN 1883

a missionary. On account of the Civil War, Burlington College was practically closed for a time. Mr. Clough therefore graduated at the Upper Iowa University. In 1862 he was married to Miss Harriet Sunderland. For a year they together taught the graded public school at Colesburg, Iowa, but his heart was set on other work. He became colporter in eastern Iowa under the American Baptist Publication Society, and for a year was zealous in the house-to-house visiting which proved to be excellent training for later village itineracy in India. Then came the call to go with the Rev. Lyman Jewett to work among the seventeen millions of Telugus in southern India. With wife and son, one and a half years old, he sailed in 1864, going around the Cape of Good Hope.

The mission to which Mr. and Mrs. Clough were appointed had come to be



known as the "Lone Star Mission," because with its one station at Nellore it was a "Lone Star" in the firmament of missions. There were thirty years of almost fruitless toil. Twice the Committee in Boston talked of giving up this barren field. But the pioneers of the mission, Day and Jewett and their wives held on. They labored and they prayed. They prophesied, "God has a great people among the Telugus." While the missionary for Ongole was yet a surveyor on the prairies of Minnesota, Dr. and Mrs. Jewett and three of their native helpers knelt one morning at sunrise on a hill overlooking Ongole, and prayed for a man to bring the gospel to this dark place where few as yet had ever heard the name of Christ. Twelve years later the man for Ongole began his work, and in the sight of "Prayer Meeting Hill" thousands were baptized in the years that followed.



It was not a matter of mere chance that the Ongole Mission became a Pariah mission. Mr. and Mrs. Clough passed a crucial test at the very outset and probably that whole mass movement hung in the balance. They had friends among the Brahmins whom they hoped to win for Christ. But one day when a company of Madigas came and asked for baptism the Brahmins intimated that if these were received, they must withdraw. In their perplexity each opened his Bible at random and the eyes of both fell on the verse: "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called; but God hath choosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise." I Cor. I, 26-27. They sought each other and showed each other their open Bibles. They feared to turn away those Madigas, lest they turn away the Christ. The

Pariahs were baptized and the Brahmins withdrew. The die was cast. Henceforth it was true of the Ongole Mission, "To the poor the gospel is preached."

The first ten years at Ongole, a town of about 10,000 inhabitants, 180 miles north of Madras, were years of blessed seed-sowing. The work was almost wholly among the Madigas, one of the aboriginal tribes of southern India. Leather workers by trade, their very occupation is abhorrent to the high caste people who would never kill a living thing. Poor, despised, ignorant, they were coming in increasing numbers. Mrs. Clough gathered children into her school at headquarters, and also the men and women of zeal who must learn to read their Bibles before they could teach or preach. After seven years of service, in 1873, they went to America and Mr. Clough collected an endowment of \$50,000 for a theological seminary

among the Telugus, which has done excellent work. Four men came out as reinforcements to the mission.

At Ongole there was steady growth. In 1876 the converts numbered 3,269, and this increase would have continued at a rate sufficiently rapid for the resources of the mission, but the famine of 1876-78 came and wrought a crisis. It ushered in as a catastrophe an event that would otherwise have been the result of normal growth — ten thousand were baptized in one year and an overwhelming responsibility was laid on the missionaries.

Seldom in modern times has there been a famine in India with so much loss of life. It lasted nearly three years. In order to provide food for the starving in his district, Mr. Clough took a contract from the Indian Government for digging three miles of the Buckingham Canal, planned to extend between Madras and Bezwada,

about 250 miles. He had a village of palm-leaf huts built, and wells dug, and to this camp at Razupalem he invited all who could come and work. There were 3,000 there all the time, many coming and going. The sick were brought on litters; many that walked from villages afar off, grew exhausted and lay down on the road to die. His staff of preachers, thirty in number, were his overseers. Each was responsible for a company of one hundred diggers, and soon became acquainted with them. If any sat down for a short rest the preacher joined them, and heard of the scattered families and those who had died. The fear of starvation and cholera was in the hearts of all. Never were those words, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden," and others like them, more in place. They sank into the minds of the listeners not only as balm, but as seed for a future fruitful harvest.



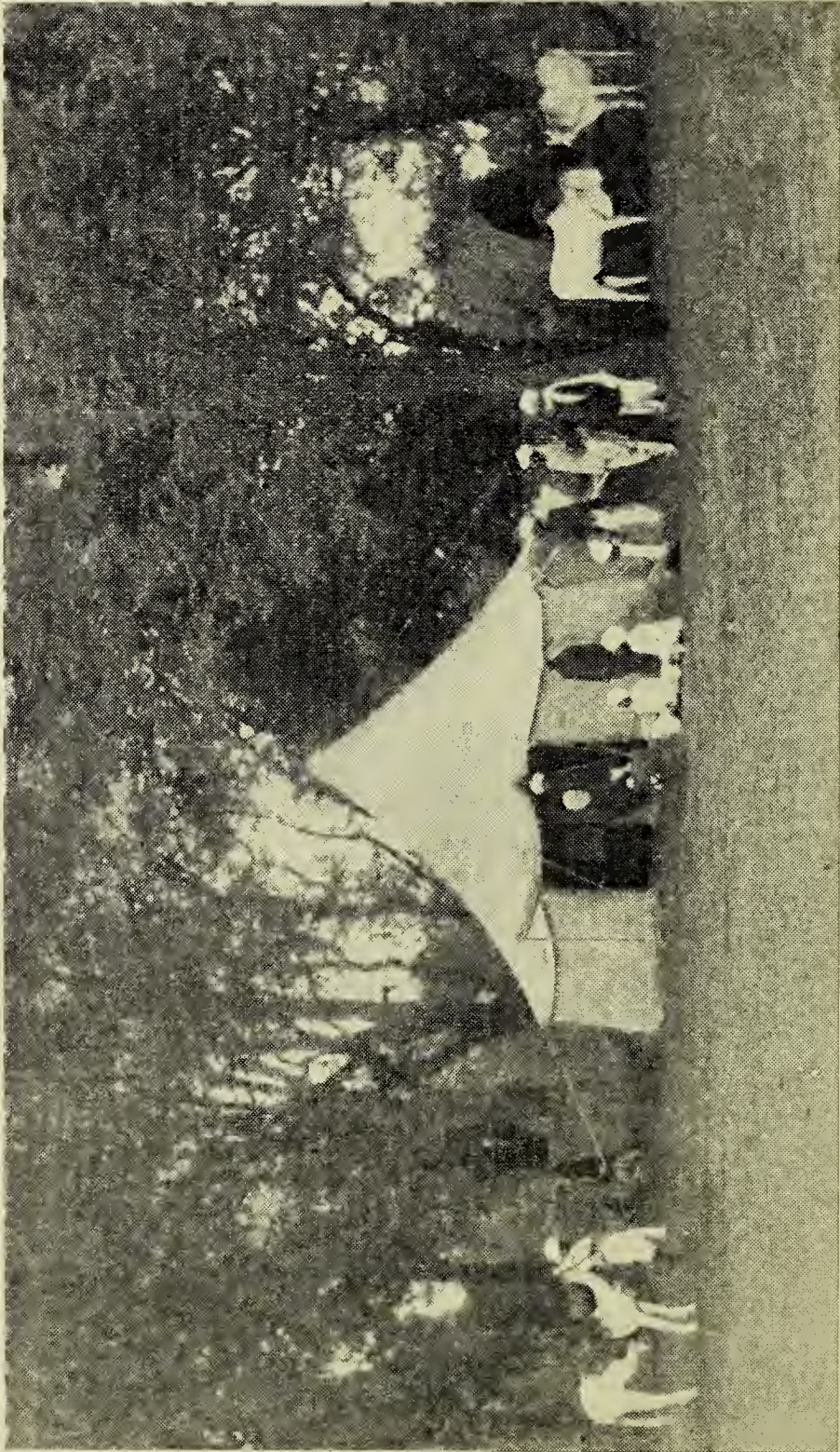
While the famine lasted none were baptized. Hundreds came but were told to wait. The preachers, going about on their fields, saw that whole villages were ready. They were a remarkable group of men, though of very meagre education. Some had the gift of the evangelist, others were pastors, some developed ability under stress of circumstances, but a spirit of service for Christ was abroad among them and carried them forward. In June, 1878, Mr. Clough wrote to them to come to Vellumpilly, ten miles north of Ongole, that they might reorganize for work, but requested them to leave the converts behind. When he arrived there, however, he found a multitude waiting for him. He mounted a wall to look into their faces and told them he had no more money to give, and asked them to go home. They cried, "We do not want help. By the blisters on our hands we

can prove to you that we have worked and will continue to work. If the next crop fail, we shall die. We want to die as Christians. Baptize us therefore!" He dared not refuse longer to receive them into the church of Christ.

Inquiry meetings on a large scale were now held in a tamarind grove near by. Each preacher gathered the converts from his special field together, and with the heads of households to assist him, he conducted his examination. Searching questions were asked and many were sent away. On the first day, July 2, 1878, a beginning was made, 614 were baptized; on the next day 2,222 followed; on the third day there were 700 more, making 3,536 in three days. The multitude gathered on the bank of the Gundlacumma River, where the water at this season of the year was fairly deep. The six ordained preachers took turns, two officiating at a time. The







DR. CLOUGH IN CAMP

SEATED IN FRONT OF HIS TENT



names of the candidates were read ; without delay and without confusion one followed the other. As one preacher pronounced the formula : " I baptize thee in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," the other preacher had a candidate before him ready to speak again those words and to baptize him likewise. And thus it was not difficult to immerse 2,222 in one day. Mr. Clough did not baptize any during those days. He stood on a bank overlooking the scene, helping and directing. Before the year was over, 9,666 members had been added to the Church at Ongole, making a total membership of 13,000.

And this ingathering continued. The Madiga community was shaken to the foundations ; the old gods were forsaken and evil customs put aside. In every case the individual had to give an account of his faith in Christ, but after that the

gregarious character of a tribal movement had its effect. Families came; villages came. In 1883 Dr. Clough had a membership of 21,000 in his mission, and the nominal adherents counted from four to five times that number. The movement extended over 7,000 square miles and the country became dotted with hundreds of Madiga Christian hamlets. It was a question what to do with this great field. Dr. Clough might have continued at the head, keeping his great flock together, with Ongole as headquarters, and men working under his direction. But this method did not insure the stability of the work. Moreover, an organization of this kind would have been un-baptistic, resembling a bishopric. The four taluks, small counties, lying farthest from Ongole, were made separate mission fields under new missionaries. Dr. Clough kept five taluks, or counties.

Ten years of hard work passed. Again the proportions were unwieldy. Again the Christians in his field numbered 20,000 and more. Thus far Dr. Clough's physical endurance had kept pace with the heavy responsibilities of the work. Now he was breaking down under his load. There were those who had grave fears lest the work should come to naught if he now fell at his post. At this juncture Dr. Henry C. Mabie, previous to entering upon his work as Home Secretary of the Missionary Union, came to Ongole on his tour of the mission fields, and persuaded the missionary of Ongole to come to America and enter upon a campaign to find twenty-five men for the Telugus. Dr. Clough arrived in America in 1890, and did not rest until the men were found. He collected \$50,000 to send them out, build homes for them and establish new mission stations. He also maintained that the

time had come when the high school at Ongole should be raised to the grade of a college, and secured an endowment of \$50,000 for this purpose. In 1892 he returned to India. A re-adjustment of the work was taken in hand. Dr. Clough loved his people when he gathered them in by the thousand, but perhaps he never loved them better than when he set off portion after portion of his great field. It was not easy to see them go. When he passed his beloved Kanigiri Taluk, with 4,000 Christians and a staff of preachers who were his choice fellow-workers, over to a younger man he said to him, before a large congregation, "I give you the apple of my eye. Take care of that field." The territory of 7,000 square miles which once he called his field is now superintended from nine mission stations, with a total membership of 50,000 and many times that number of adherents.



With little more than the taluk in which Ongole is situated left to him he began another term of service. In 1893 Mrs. Clough, who had been sojourning in America, died as a result of a distressing accident. She was greatly beloved among the Telugus and left two sons and three daughters. Two of the latter married missionaries and are at work in Ongole and Madras. In 1894 Dr. Clough married Miss Emma Rauschenbusch who had previously been a worker in the mission. Famines have of late visited India, and twice he took contracts under the government to furnish relief for the thousands of the starving ones. Nor have the ingatherings ceased. The Church at Ongole, the mother of so many stations, counts to-day 19,421 members. In January, 1901, Dr. Clough baptized more than 1,500 men and women, and many more were waiting for the ordinance out in the villages.

While in the midst of this ingathering, in camp twenty miles from home, he fell and broke his thigh. For weeks he lay at death's door and when finally he was compelled to start on his journey to America on a stretcher, the native Christians began to come to Ongole in order to see him once more. Word was sent not to come, but if they loved him to stay away. About 2,000 came, nevertheless. It took three missionaries to manage the crowd. They promised to be silent if he could be brought on the verandah to say *salaam* to them. They kept their promise, and when later he was carried to the railway station on his cot, they took off their sandals and followed silently through the still, starlit night. They and he are waiting and praying for the day when he will have recovered and can return to them.









SUPPLEMENTARY PARAGRAPH TO USE

In 1901 Dr. Clough suffered a severe  
tour in South India and returned to  
strength under careful medical treat  
health, but unwilling to be separa  
turned to them in 1902. In 1906,  
retired from active service, but re  
1910, when he came back to America  
suffering until his death, which o  
Rochester, New York, November 23,

WITH SKETCH OF DR. CLOUGH

an accident while on an evangelistic  
to America, hoping to recover his  
ment. He never regained vigorous  
td from his beloved Telugus, re-  
forced by increasing weakness, he  
ained in India until the spring of  
bearing his heavy burden of  
urred at the Graham Sanatorium in  
10.

